

Ser.no. 10/656,948
Amendment dated January 11, 2006
In Reply to Office Action dated July 13, 2005

ELECTION and REMARKS

Claims 1 to 31 have now been cancelled or previously withdrawn. New claims 32 to 73 have been added. New Claims 32 to 73 are directed at a two-piece exhaust flange comprising a first part having a receiving surface and a pipe attachment means arranged on a pipe attachment surface opposite to said receiving surface and a second part wherein one of the first or second parts is made of a powder metallurgically produced material.

Claims 1 and 3 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US patent No. 6,299,216 to Thompson ("Thompson") in view of US patent No. 4,792,162 to Medvick ("Medvick"). Applicant has cancelled original claims 1 and 3. Applicant respectfully submits that neither Thompson nor Medvick, when read separately or together, disclose, teach, suggest or obviate the subject matter of a two-piece exhaust flange. Retraction of Examiner's rejection of original Claims 1 and 3 is respectfully requested.

Claim 2 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thompson in view of Medvick and further in view of US Patent No. 6,079,752 to Metsinger ("Metsinger"). Applicant respectfully submits that Metsinger does not disclose the subject matter of the new claims. Retraction of Examiner's rejection of original claim 2 is respectfully requested.

We look forward to further communication on this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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IP-KIT-123628/1